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Grandma Veitch
87 years living at North Hall
October 15, 1928

Mrs. Veitch, who was 87 last May, says it passes her understanding how people have to work so much harder today than in the pioneer days.

"People have every kind of machinery to help them these days," she says, "there's ready made clothing on the market, and money to pay for them. There are fewer children in a family, yet we find the farmers nowadays working on into the nights. They drudge all winter, instead of cracking nuts around the fire on an evening and visiting their neighbours like we used to do."

My grandmother cooked dinner with a crane, and raked hot ashes and coals over a kettle to bake her bread. When her daughters married, they listened through a hung up quilt to timber wolves howling on the doorstep. They wove wool and flax to make their clothes and wrested hand to hand with nature for existence. Even I spun wool when I married and came to this farm to live 69 years ago. My husband had never as much as heard tell of a ball of binder twine, yet with it all, we seemed to have time for more real leisure than we do now. It puzzles me."

Grandma Veitch ought to know what she is talking about, for with body and faculties well preserved, she still persists in taking part in the daily work at her fine home overlooking the Otter.

She brings out convincing proof of the labour of the past--beautiful, intricately plaided flannels woven at pioneer looms; well preserved garments of fullcloth, once pressed and fulled to the smoothness of broadcloth by her brother-in-law, William Veitch, in his carding mill at Springer's Hollow, or as it was later called Wilson's Hollow.

Grandma Veitch (Jane Story) was born at Hubbards Mills, a spot now reverted to its natural wild picturesqueness. In May 1841, it was a scene of a lively timber business, in which her father was employed. Her first detached memories of her childhood are all connected with another place--Aunt Betty's--her mother's sister at Waterdown, below Hamilton, where Baby Jane, with her two sisters were taken when she was a year old, on the death of her mother. She remembers being handed down through a trap door in the floor into Aunt Betty's cellar; the broad Scotch accent used by the household; the playless Presbyterian Sabbaths when even dishes were not washed; the running away to the barn that was being built, and cutting her foot on the adze; and the time when a man got lost in the forest and the men kept calling until they rescued him.

Father Story used to come too, when he treked to Hamilton on his two-day teaming trips for the Hubbard Settlement. He ran a little store in one of the houses and took up drugs for the doctor.

When Jane was about six, her father took the children home with him to a new stepmother. Shortly after, the Story's moved to a farm west of Richmond. She then lived almost opposite the Richmond school-house. This was where the cemetery west of the village is now located. Out of school hours she used to listen to terrifying tales of ghosts in connection with the graves which already lay at the back part of the lot. During school hours she sat on one of the long bench seats that faced inward from about the walls. She was taught by one after another of a series of pioneer teachers. They were William Hatch, the first of that name in the settlement; Miss Lucy McKenney, Miss Phoebe McCallum, Miss Wills, Miss Livingston, Miss Mary Ann McMath and Mr. Hughes, etc.

On Sundays, an Anglican minister from a distance, held services in the school-house. On this occasion, Mr. Springall, from the post office, would come up carrying a cushion, and if the weather was cool, would obtain fire from Mr. Story to warm the school. But the Story's themselves went to a Methodist Sunday School in the village which circulated historical books and the like from their library. So, after all, we see that we moderns are not so far ahead of the pioneers.

One of the outstanding memories of this period of her life was the marriage of her step-mother's youngest sister, Almira Walling to Dr. Dancy. It was a May and December wedding, she 18 and he 60. Aunt Almira had been unusually well educated for the time and day at Watertown and New York, and was a maiden of importance. Such lovely clothes as little Jane gazed upon, lying spread in state upon a spare room bed--a shot silk dress, magnificent shawl, furs, and many lovely things. There were "styles" in the pioneer days, as there are now, to be wonderfully admired and faithfully followed. Fortunately, customs allowed them to be pursued at a slower gait than the present. The archives of the Veitch household preserve a style book of 1840, correctly picturing "backs" and "fronts" with the correct way to grasp the wiles of fickle but relentless fashion.

When Jane was fifteen she went to live with her married sister, Mrs. Berry of North Hall. When she was twenty, she married John Veitch, of the same neighborhood. It was

the simplest wedding you could imagine. She just put on her best white waist and drab skirt, and they went in a buggy off to Preacher Griffin's at Griffins Corners and were married. There was only one wedding present, a little silver salt spoon given by a neighbour. No mother had laid up for her the usual heavy stores of quilts and blankets for the pioneer bride. But then, she was going to live with "the old people" and did not need them.

The years passed. The children came-- a boy, Oscar, then a daughter, who is now Mrs. Ed Wallace; then Frank and Edith. The first pioneer heads of the family passed on. The modern day began to creep in. The plain cabin changed to the present red brick mansion. The farm became familiar with binders and steam threshers. Then the death of John Veitch at the ripe old age of 79. At last, very swiftly came motor cars, the Great War, airplanes, radios--wonders and inventions tumbling over each other.

Mrs. Veitch thinks her life has been a very quiet uneventful life. But a life that spans the wide era from the merry days when the neighbour women went picnic-shopping together with their kegs of butter all in one lumber wagon, to Vienna, Cornell or some such place, and the present day when a truck with rubber tires and engine brings the bread to the door and far off voices sing over the radio in the dining room can hardly be called an uneventful one.

Grandma Veitch is the last living link between her family and their earliest pioneer forbears.

The farm Grandma Veitch lived on consisted of 132 acres and was located on lots 8, 9, and 10, Concession 8 of Bayham.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

Grandma and Grandpa Story came from Newcastle-on Tyne. Grandmother had been Mary Fletcher, the daughter of a gentleman-steward, and gently reared. Mr. Story, a brewer and a butcher, had been able to provide her with servants. When her husband took the imigration fever, a wise and correct intuition prompted his wife to oppose the venture vigorously. However, when obliged to give in, through Mr. Story's persistence, she sensibly laid in a heavy store of blankets, and any useful article in her power to take with her. There was trouble from the very first. A storm blew the vessel off course and the passengers nearly starved to death. At the end of three months voyage they only kept body and soul together by a doled out daily ration of ship's biscuits and shark meat. After they landed, Typhus

fever broke out in the family and Grandma Story did not have her clothes off during her six weeks of hard nursing.

They lived first in Ogdensburg, and then at Black Rock. Grandpa Story bought two farms, one at Chippewa and the other over the river in New York State. It was, no doubt, on account of his older boys by his first wife that he made this purchase. A death in the family in England called all these boys home to the "old land" to get their shares of property and none returned. Mrs. Veitch does not know what became of the farms. Grandpa Story died after a time and although Grandma Story had to work hard, she won out. Her grave is in the Richmond Cemetery mentioned before. Grandpa Story had a diary in which many other notes were kept, all precious in the family. This was burned in the house of one of her daughters, who married Solomon Moore.

Of her Mother's people (Anna Hall), Mrs. Veitch does not know so much. Grandfather Hall was a shepherd (Scottish) and died on the Atlantic coming over and was buried at sea. Grandma Hall had quite a family of girls and boys to work for, when left a widow, but she too won out, and her history turned from tragedy to harmony.

It was rather a coincidence that the granddaughter of the Storey's should marry into a family also coming from Newcastle-on-Tyne. At the Veitches home there is a very ancient leather-bound Bible, in the register of which are these items: William Veitch, born at Calf Close, parish of Simonbourne, county of Northumberland, 1796, and another of his wife, Isabella Heardman, born at Haughten Green, parish of Simonbourne, etc.

William Veitch's father was a farmer, though William had been educated to be a navigator. His knowledge was not to be used in this calling, however, he was to be involved in clerical work and be a superintendent of commons schools and do business on the town council in the wilds of a new colony. Coming to Canada soon after their marriage in Newcastle-on-Tyne, they lived for some time in Quebec. Their eldest child, Margaret, was born there, and later married Nathan Howell of Bayham. They later moved to Riviere du Loup where Mr. Veitch kept books and the like for a living.

It was the Heardman connection which brought the family up here to his wife's people at Corinth. For a time the Veitch's lived where Leslie Pressey does now, then to Detroit and afterward, returning and buying the land they at present occupy. The

situation was in a "Gore", the deed covering four part lots. One deed is direct from the crown, another is from "Clergy Reserves" a third from Mr. Mitchell, who lived across the Otter, and the fourth, we understand was a purchase from Mr. Heardman.

William Veitch, Sr. worked for years on the township council, and his his duties as examiner of prospective school teachers, is well remembered in the district. Ancient exercise and account books of his are treasured by his descendants, the former exhibiting problems of London and Portuguese exchange done in an immaculate penmanship, before which a modern bank accountant's book would blush. Talking about the modern farm bookkeeping and

budgeting, here is an excerpt from Mr. Veitch's account.

After certain timber deals concerning scowage and piling at Port Burwell, these have been entered: **Wheat** crop 1874--308 bushels, sold to Procunier; 40 bushels; seed, 20 bushels, sold at Port Burwell 1140 bushels; sold at Fraser, 6 bushels, to mill 6 bushels, sold at Springfield, 45 bushels, etc.

Here is a scrap of diary; April 19th, 1817--sowed barley, fine growing weather; April 30, sowed oats; May 5 sowed spring wheat; May 15 sowed peas; May 30 planted potatoes; wet all through May.

John Veitch, the late husband of Grandma Veitch of this article, was the youngest son of William Veitch, and was born in Bayham.

CHARLES TURNBULL

It was in 1840, 14 years before the Crimean War that Mr. Turnbull's grandparents and family of eight made the seven-week sailboat crossing from Scotland. His grandfather drowned while bathing the travel dust off at Halifax. His grandmother journeyed on undaunted to settle with the children at Guysboro, Houghton Township, east of Straffordville.

They suffered times of incredible hardship, which included living on tree buds, and being attacked by hostile Indians. But one of the children survived to become a prosperous farmer and the father of Mr. Charles Turnbull.

Charles was born some four or five miles east of the village of Corinth, and spent his entire lifetime in the immediate vicinity. He distinctly remembered the building of the C.N.R. Wabash through here. He was born Jan. 16, 1864, son of Mary Jane McClean and James Turnbull, a native of Scotland. He was a Conservative ever since the days of John A. Macdonald. He farmed for many years in the area and bought and shipped hogs.

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He married the former Melissa Jenkins of North Dorchester, on March 23, 1887. The couple were widely honored on their diamond wedding anniversary in 1947. They received letters of congratulations from King George VI, Prime Minister McKenzie King, and Premier George Drew. His wife died in 1950.

His only son, Earle C. Turnbull was assistant division superintendant of the C.N.R. Wabash in St. Thomas. He had one grandson, Keith, a draftsman in London, a granddaughter, Mrs. Harry Patrick, St. Thomas, and two great grandchildren, Janice Ann and Carol Lynn Turnbull.

He was one of the pupils who marched out of the old school at North Bayham into the present one.

Mr Turnbull was active in baseball, playing until he was 40 years old for various teams around the district such as Bayham, Eden, Richmond and Straffordville. He was manager of the Corinth team until the 1920's. He was always interested in sports and was a regular attendant at the games in Tillsonburg, and followed the world series on television.

Charles Turnbull began his farming career in the late 70's. Then hogs sold at 3 cents a pound, eggs at 8 cents a dozen, and a quart of Jersey milk (unpasteurized) cost 5 cents.

He added \$15 a month to his income by collecting the mail from the twice daily C.N.R. Wabash trains at the Corinth Station.

One regret he had on his 96th birthday was "you can't get a real basketful of speckled trout from the creeks around Straffordville these days, not since everyone has cars and come from such a distance."

He died in St. Thomas just a few days short of his 100th birthday.

Mention should also be made of his service on the Bayham Council. He served as Councillor for a term of 15 years, under 5 different reeves.

